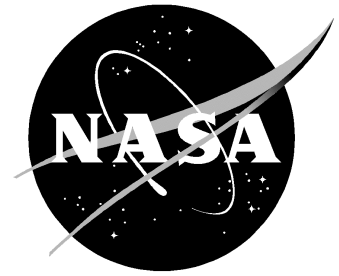


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NOTE TO EDITORS

NASA helps students design safer cockpit door

Engineers and technicians from NASA's Langley Research Center will be on hand Wednesday morning, March 20, when Hampton High School students unveil a full-scale model of a new, safer airliner cockpit door and other aviation security improvements.

The Future Engineers of Hampton High decided to tackle a real-life engineering challenge following the terrorist attacks in three U.S. locations Sept. 11, 2001.

Researchers at NASA Langley helped the five students refine their designs for a reinforced cockpit door and an on-board camera passenger surveillance system. Not only did the researchers visit Hampton High's Engineering Technology II class a number of times, the students visited NASA Langley to get a close-up look at a former airliner that's now a flying laboratory.

"By having NASA come in, it has allowed the students to see what it's like in the real world ... to think outside the box," said Chandra Oaks-Garcia, Hampton High engineering technology teacher.

One of Oaks-Garcia's students has already been accepted to the Pennsylvania State University College of Engineering. "I want to be an engineer and it's nice to see how engineers at NASA can come out and help us with our project and give us some pointers and advice," said senior Casey Roberts. "It's been a wonderful experience."

The NASA researchers agree. "I like seeing the light bulb click when young people become interested," said NASA Langley aerospace technologist Mark Wynkoop. "It's very rewarding to see that."

Students plan to demonstrate mock-ups of their designs to the researchers and invited guests at 10 a.m. Wednesday, March 20, at Hampton High School in the Engineering Technology classroom.

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